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appear. On Gregory's hypothesis recessives should appear in later generations. On the second hypothesis, homozygous races of the types AAa′a′ and aaA′A′ would be obtainable, in appearance like heterozygotes. These would breed true indefinitely when selfed, but should give recessives in F_2 after crossing, as in a case proved by Nilsson-Ehle.

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NOTES AND LITERATURE

A STUDY OF DESERT VEGETATION[1]

Between three and four years ago Dr. W. A. Cannon, of the Desert Botanical Laboratory at Tucson, Arizona, visited southern Algeria in order to become acquainted with the more obvious features of the plant physiological conditions of the desert, and to make detailed studies of the root habits of certain desert plants. From Algiers the journey proceeded nearly due south about three hundred miles to Ghardaia, thence east about one hundred miles to Ouargla, and another hundred miles to Touggourt, returning through Biskra, and Batna to the northern coast. Throughout this long and wearisome journey the vegetation was studied in connection with the geographical and climatic environment and the results are brought together in a volume of somewhat more than eighty pages of text and thirty-seven plates, one of which is an outline map of the region visited.

Dr. Cannon speaks of the similarity of the flora of Algeria to that of southern Spain, France and Italy, where one is reminded of the vegetation of portions of California. Once in the desert on the way south low-growing shrubs on the plain become characteristic, including species of *Tamarix, Zizyphus* and *Artemisia.* Where water is available for irrigation, oases occur with their luxuriant vegetation of date palms, apricots, figs, mulberries, peaches, pears, oranges, as well as artichokes, beans, carrots, melons, peas, potatoes, squashes, etc. Further south the plain is covered with small stones and pebbles and "not a tree, shrub, or herb appears to hide the bare ground. The mountains are naked rock, while the harsh outline of desert ranges and the distant low sand ridges give no evidence of plant life. But a closer examination of plain, dune and mountains reveals the presence either of living forms or of the dried remains of plants of a preceding moist season, in numbers and in kinds not at first suspected." All of which might well describe the desert conditions in our own southwest. This similarity is emphasized by the resemblance of many of the plants to those found in our Arizona deserts. Thus the "quidad" (*Acanthyllis tragacanthoides*) "has a very close resemblance to small specimens of 'ocotillo' (*Fouquieria splendens*) of the southwestern United States." And this resemblance extends to the structure of the spines and the return of the foliage after rains. It is interesting to note that the natives burn off its numerous spines, after which the stems "are eaten with avidity by camels," reminding us of the similar treatment and use of some cactuses in Arizona. Further to the south the vegetation is still more sparse and xerophytic, including *Ephedra, Retama, Haloxylon,* and among grasses, *Aristida pungens.* Near Ouargla, the southern point reached, there are places where no vegetation is present, as on the dunes, and yet on the fixed sand nearby were found *Euphorbia guyoniana, Retama retam* and *Genista saharæ.*

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[1] Botanical Features of the Algerian Sahara. By William Austin Cannon, Washington, D. C. Published by the Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1913.

Much attention was given to the root habits of the plants encountered, and in the general summary which follows the account of the journey comparisons are made with the root habits of Arizona plants.

With this meager introduction we must refer the reader to the volume itself, which it is quite impossible to summarize in these pages. One thing impresses itself forcibly upon the reader, and that is that a desert is a *hungry place* in which the permanent vegetation maintains itself against plant-eating animals by a thorny or spiny protection. Yet Dr. Cannon points out that in this character of spininess the American desert plants excel those of the plants of the Sahara region.

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